

HAMILTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINUTES OF MEETING

MEMORIAL ROOM, HAMILTON TOWN HALL

March 6, 2019

Members Present: Brian Stein (president), Bill Gisness, Anthony Nickas, Rick Mitchell, and Tom Goodwin

Members Absent: None

Coordinator: Dorr Fox

Brian Stein called the Hamilton Development Corporation (HDC) meeting to order at 7:32 a.m. with a quorum present.

Tony Passaretti, 85 Linden St., attended the meeting.

Warrant for Bills

Mr. Stein presented a warrant for \$8,390.50 that included Dorr Fox and Mary Alice Cookson's time, the maintenance fee, and Bob Shannon's bill for the second half of the cost for the market study. However, the HDC hasn't received the study yet.

Tom Goodwin said he thought it rude receiving the bill before the study and suggested they not vote on it yet and remove it from the warrant for now. Mr. Stein amended the warrant, subtracting out Mr. Shannon's invoice.

Mr. Goodwin made a motion to approve payment of Warrant HDC-1919 in amount of \$4,140. 50. Mr. Gisness seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve payment of the amended warrant.

Mr. Fox said the HDC had overrun its budget in the Consulting Services category. Anthony Nickas suggested they look at the budget. Mr. Fox went upstairs to his office to get it.

After looking at the budget, Mr. Nickas made a motion to increase the Consulting Services expense line by \$10K. Rick Mitchell seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to accept the motion.

They decided it was better and cleaner to increase this category rather than draw the money from somewhere else in the budget, such as Repairs and Maintenance.

Approve Minutes—Jan. 23 and Feb. 20

Mr. Gisness noted a last name was missing from the Feb. 20 minutes. Mr. Fox filled in the name: Alexa Lucci, who is the person responsible for setting up the Town website.

Mr. Stein made a motion to approve the Jan. 23 and Feb. 20 minutes with the Feb. 20 minutes amended to include the missing last name. Rick Mitchell seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously (5-0) to approve the minutes.

Selection of President

Mr. Stein announced he is stepping down as president for two reasons: because it's time for someone else to do it (he's had the role for about six years) and because, with his new business, he doesn't have enough time. He noted the HDC had talked a while ago about electing a new president every couple of years. The only issue is that the president's name is on such things as the insurance and State filings so those would need to be updated more often. Mr. Gisness said he liked the idea of a two-year term so all the responsibility doesn't fall on one person.

Mr. Goodwin nominated Mr. Mitchell for president. Mr. Mitchell said he was willing to take on the role. Mr. Nickas seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously 5-0 to appoint Mr. Mitchell as president to a two-year term.

HDC members discussed updating the HDC bylaw/policy to specify that the HDC presidency would be a two-year term. Mr. Fox said he would find the policy and send it to them. He will also inform the Town Manager's office about the action taken and that Mr. Mitchell was the new HDC president.

Downtown Improvements

Mr. Fox said Ms. Lucci gave an estimate of \$2K to set up a website as a page on the Town's existing website or \$5K to set up a stand-alone page. He said he talked with Angela Arvenites of A Monogram Shop, who is the person leading the charge of creating a Facebook page for the downtown businesses. He said at first she was concerned about there being two different sources of information (Facebook page and website) out there but then she decided that would be OK provided the information were consistent.

Mr. Mitchell wondered if the businesses could do their own website with the HDC becoming involved. He wasn't sure how much people would use the Town's webpage and

was concerned about how updating events would be handled. Mr. Fox said he spends only about three or four hours updating the Town webpages for the HDC, Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust, Community Preservation Committee, and Historic District Commission.

Mr. Gisness asked what information would be included on the site and the HDC discussed that events, such as a horse show or activity happening downtown, would be posted there in addition to listing each of the businesses.

Mr. Fox said Ms. Cookson had offered to write the listings and provide the updating to the webpage. She said because she handles the Board of Selectmen (BOS) minutes, she learns firsthand about the events happening in town (because they must all go to the BOS for approval) and she said she could add the events onto the website as she hears of them. Also, she has experience writing listings for businesses in her prior magazine editing work putting out a "Best of the Best" issue of restaurants and shops.

Mr. Fox said he would check with the Town Manager, who said he would talk with Town Counsel, about the legality of having a site on the Town's website that links to the businesses' sites.

Mr. Gisness talked about wanting to send out monthly emails to the business owners to tell them what the HDC was doing on their behalf, such as telling them the HDC had just signed the contract with Nunans for the flower baskets. He thinks the email should be sent monthly or quarterly and hopes, as a result, some business owners will attend some HDC meetings. Mr. Fox said he hadn't sent out this month's email yet because he didn't think the HDC had accomplished enough to write about. But now he thought that they had and would do so. Mr. Mitchell asked Mr. Fox to draft the email and send it to the HDC members to take a look at before it is sent to the businesses.

The HDC discussed that they would like to have one of the business owners as a member of the HDC board.

Mr. Gisness said regarding the website, he thinks the HDC should do it. Mr. Goodwin agreed. Mr. Mitchell said he didn't think \$2K for an add-on to the website was a problem. Mr. Nickas asked where it would reside and was concerned about people not being able to find it. Mr. Fox said it could perhaps go under the "Community" tab or it could have its own tab. Mr. Mitchell suggested "Village Events" or "Village Happenings." Mr. Fox said the Rockport site has "Visitors" but they did not want that as Hamilton is not really a tourist destination. They discussed some potential names for the tab. Mr. Fox will talk with Ms. Lucci about this. Mr. Fox suggested Ms. Lucci's fee could come out of the 10% Account (10% of the Meals Tax money) instead of from the Consulting Services category. He will check with the Finance Department on that.

Mr. Stein noted Town Meeting is coming up and a warrant is being put together regarding what amount from the Meals Tax goes to the HDC. He wondered what the correct figure was. Ms. Cookson said a warrant article was discussed at the BOS meeting and the \$65K amount previously given had been raised to \$74K in the proposed warrant article. Mr. Nickas said they could put \$74K in the budget as a placeholder and then make an adjustment if necessary. Mr. Gisness thought it cleaner to have a number to work from rather than just saying something like total of meals tax receipts.

59/63 Willow Street

The HDC is waiting on the market study to see the best use of the property, then they will work with a team that includes an architect, a civil engineer, and an attorney to go through the process of permitting the project.

Mr. Passaretti said the nuisance tree discussed at previous HDC meetings has not yet been taken down due to it being too wet for the tree service to do the work. Mr. Stein said he would look into that.

Mr. Fox had compiled a list of civil engineering firms that the HDC might approach with the RFP. The HDC offered thoughts about who on the list might be good for the project. Mr. Gisness didn't think it would be a conflict of interest if the HDC chose those that the Planning Board was familiar with. The HDC provided input on architects and lawyers whose work they were familiar with. Regarding attorneys, Mr. Mitchell wondered if the HDC's legal counsel could handle it. Mr. Nickas said he thought no, that they needed someone who specializes in it. The members listed some attorneys they knew and Mr. Fox highlighted ones he thought might want to do the project.

After discussing a list of architects, engineers, and attorneys to approach, the HDC discussed with Mr. Passaretti that meeting with the neighbors of Willow Street would definitely be part of the process and would be included in the RFP.

Mr. Fox was asked by the HDC to talk with Linda Meiggs at the Shoppes at Hamilton Crossing about putting a sign on the property. Mr. Stein hasn't yet talked to Connolly's Pharmacy about perhaps putting a sign on the side of their building. Mr. Fox still wants to talk with People's Bank about perhaps locating something outside the bank on the corner.

Regarding the civil engineering scope of services put together by Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Gisness made a note that it should say 20-24 "bedrooms" rather than "units."

Mr. Fox noted he had told Mr. Shannon he anticipated his invoice would be approved today. Mr. Goodwin said he would talk with Mr. Shannon. The market study was due at the end of January and it is now March, he noted.

Ms. Gisness asked if there were something in writing from Salem Bank for the assessed value Mr. Goodwin said they need to pay for the appraisal before they can get a copy of it. Once they get back the initial responses to the RFP, they will decide how they want to pay for it. Mr. Nickas said they have the funds, but that money is earmarked into the budget. He will run the current reports of where they stand for this year. By the time the project would go out to bid, the HDC will have an infusion of cash for FY'20.

New/Old Business

None.

Adjournment

Mr. Stein made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 a.m. Mr. Goodwin seconded the motion. The HDC voted unanimously among those present (3-0) to adjourn the meeting.

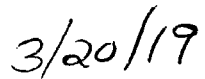
Prepared by:



Mary Alice Cookson



Attest



Date